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**Voices of the North Chorus Celebrates 80th Anniversary
of the Barbershop Harmony Society
with “Moment of Harmony” April 11**

For more than 40 years, the Voices of the North Chorus of Platteville has been making sweet harmony in the Tri-County area. This year, the chapter celebrates a landmark occasion: the 80th Anniversary of the founding of the Barbershop Harmony Society.

A special songfest and birthday party will be held on April 11, 2018, at the Platteville Performing Arts Center, 321 West Palm Parkway in Platteville. The public is invited for some cake and harmony featuring the chorus, quartets, and special guests **Meadowlarks** quartet from Platteville High School.

“We’re going to celebrate the the way our singing Society started,” said chapter president Pete Patterson. “In April of 1938, a fellow named O.C. Cash in Tulsa, Oklahoma, invited a few acquaintances to get together to sing one evening, and the idea blew up out of control literally overnight.” Twenty-six men attended that first meeting; within a month, more than 100 men were gathering, and within a year, the idea had spread like wildfire to more than 2000 members from coast to coast and Canada.

Today, 80 years later, there are more than 20,000 members of the Barbershop Harmony Society, plus singers around the world in organizations from New Zealand, Sweden, and more. “We’re part of something really special,” says Patterson. “Anywhere in the world that I go, I can find someone to take me in and sing.”

The Voices of the North Chorus plays an active role in the Tri-County arts community. Founded in 1973, the chorus stages annual performances featuring world-class guest talent,

and its 30-man show chorus. The group has been particularly involved in reaching out to support music education in the school system. “We’ve lived with this tremendous gift of music all our lives,” said Patterson, “and we want to make sure every child gets to experience the thrill of raising his or her voice in harmony with others. It is a debt that we owe the future.”

The Meadowlarks quartet are a great example. “We heard about the youth contest from our teacher,” says Justin Thyme, lead singer, “and we looked up a bunch of barbershop on YouTube and got hooked. The guys in Voices of the North have been great in helping us get ready for the contest, finding us a coach, and helping us with travel expenses for the competition. I expect to sing barbershop the rest of my life -- it’s just so great to make those chords lock together. It’s like nothing else I’ve ever sung.”

Full details on the history of the Barbershop Harmony Society, including vintage footage, photos, and history notes, can be found at www.barbershop.org or www.facebook.com/barbershopharmonysociety

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